

Highlights from the Delaware River Basin Commission

Pennsylvania DEP Citizens Advisory Council
September 9, 2025

Elizabeth Koniers Brown, Director of External Affairs
& Communications



Today's Agenda

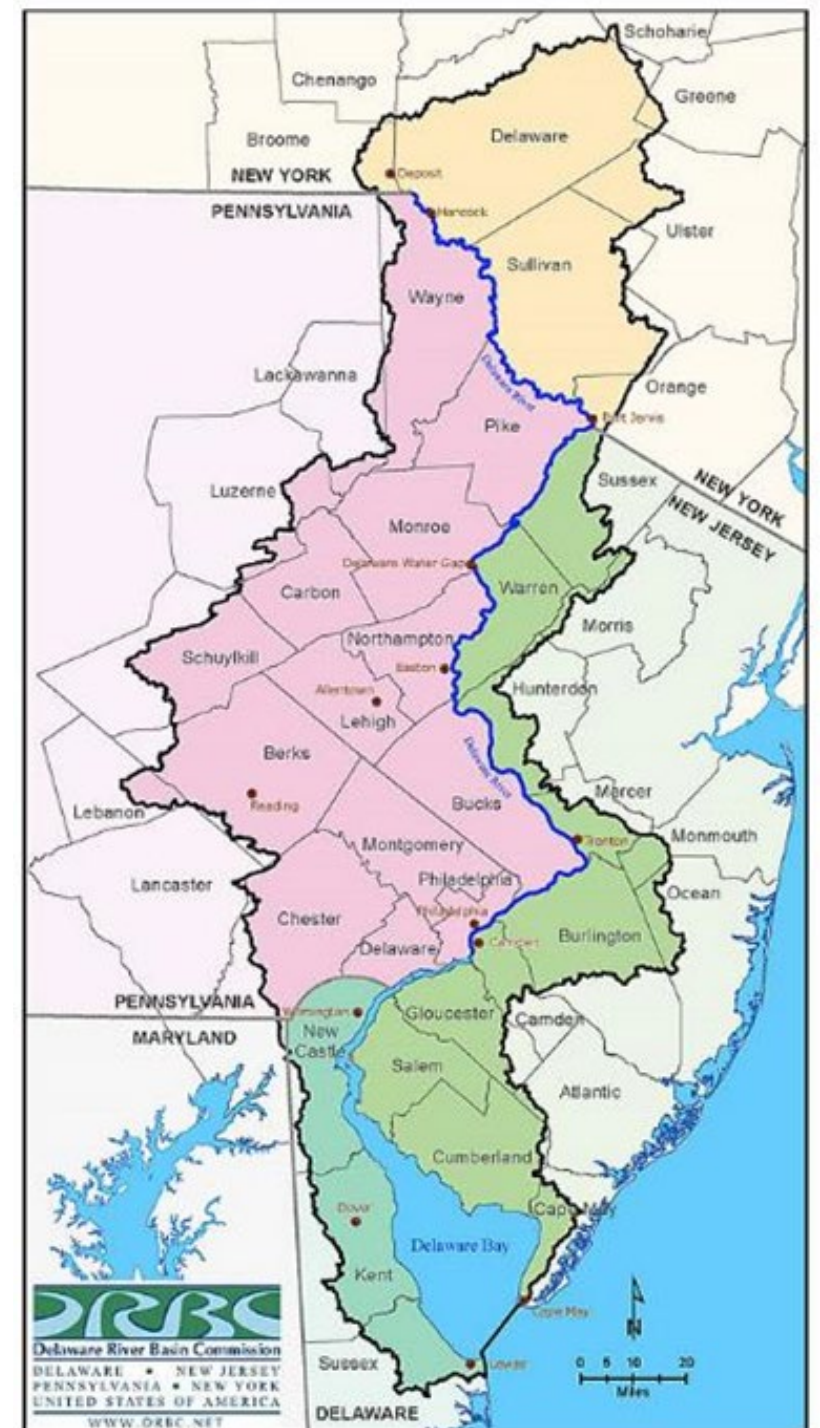
- Introduction to DRBC
- Project Highlights
 - Dissolved Oxygen
 - Data Centers
 - Resilience Planning
 - Freshwater Salinization
- Questions & discussion

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is water-rich



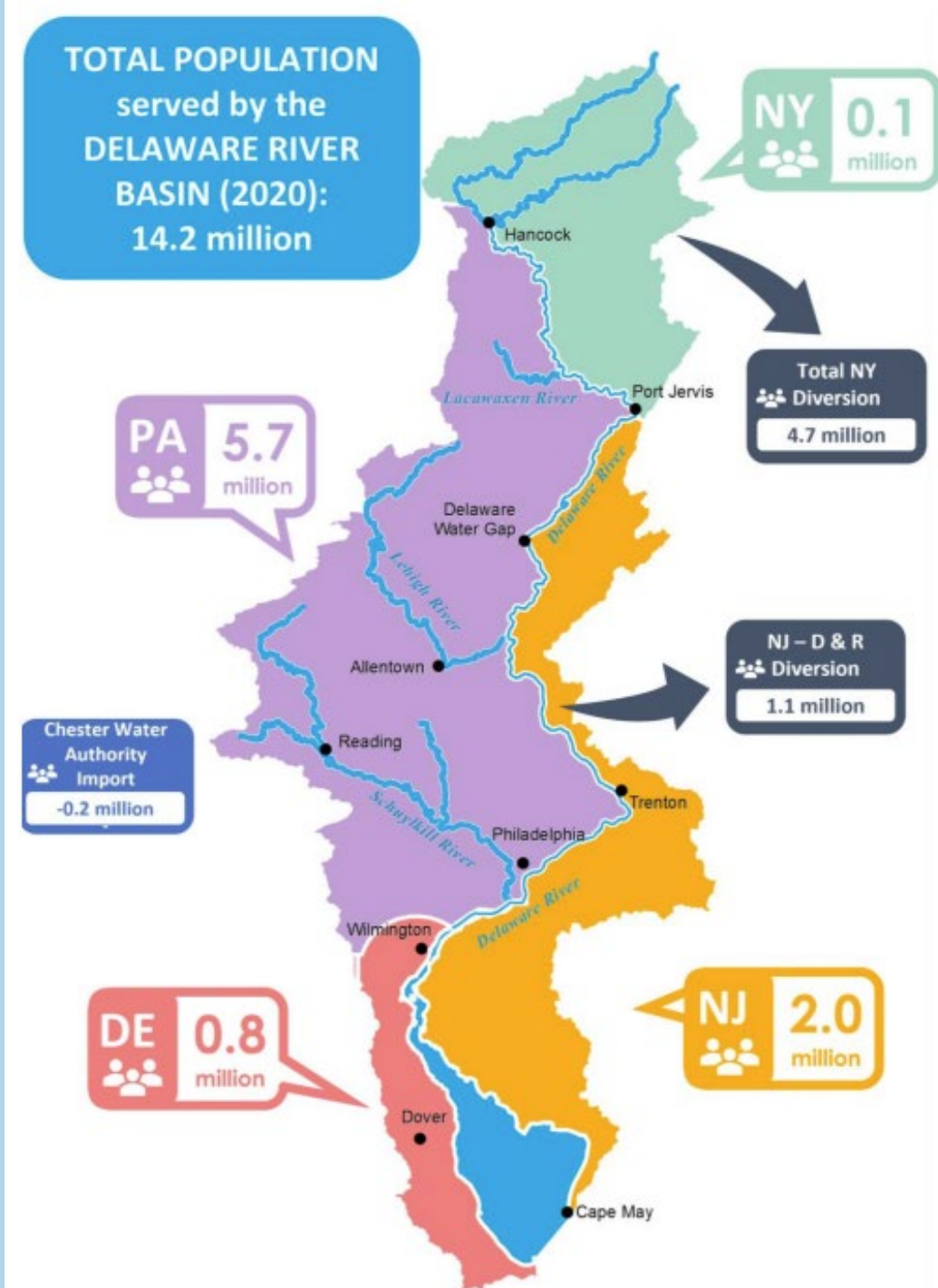
The Delaware River Basin is a national treasure

- 330-mile river
- 13,500 sq. mi. watershed
- Free-flowing mainstem
- Tidal from ocean to Trenton
- Unique habitats & communities



The Delaware River Basin meets our needs

- 14+ million people in four states
- Half of NYC drinking water
- \$21+ billion in economic value
- Interstate boundary



The Delaware River Basin Commission is a federal-interstate government agency



Our Mission

Manage, protect, and improve the water resources of the Delaware River Basin.

Our Vision

Provide trusted, effective, and coordinated management of the Basin's shared water resources.

The DRBC's authority and jurisdiction are defined by the Delaware River Basin Compact

- U.S. Constitution Compact Clause
- Congressionally approved agreement
- Federal and state law
- Provides regulatory authority



DRBC's programs address two broad topics

FLOW

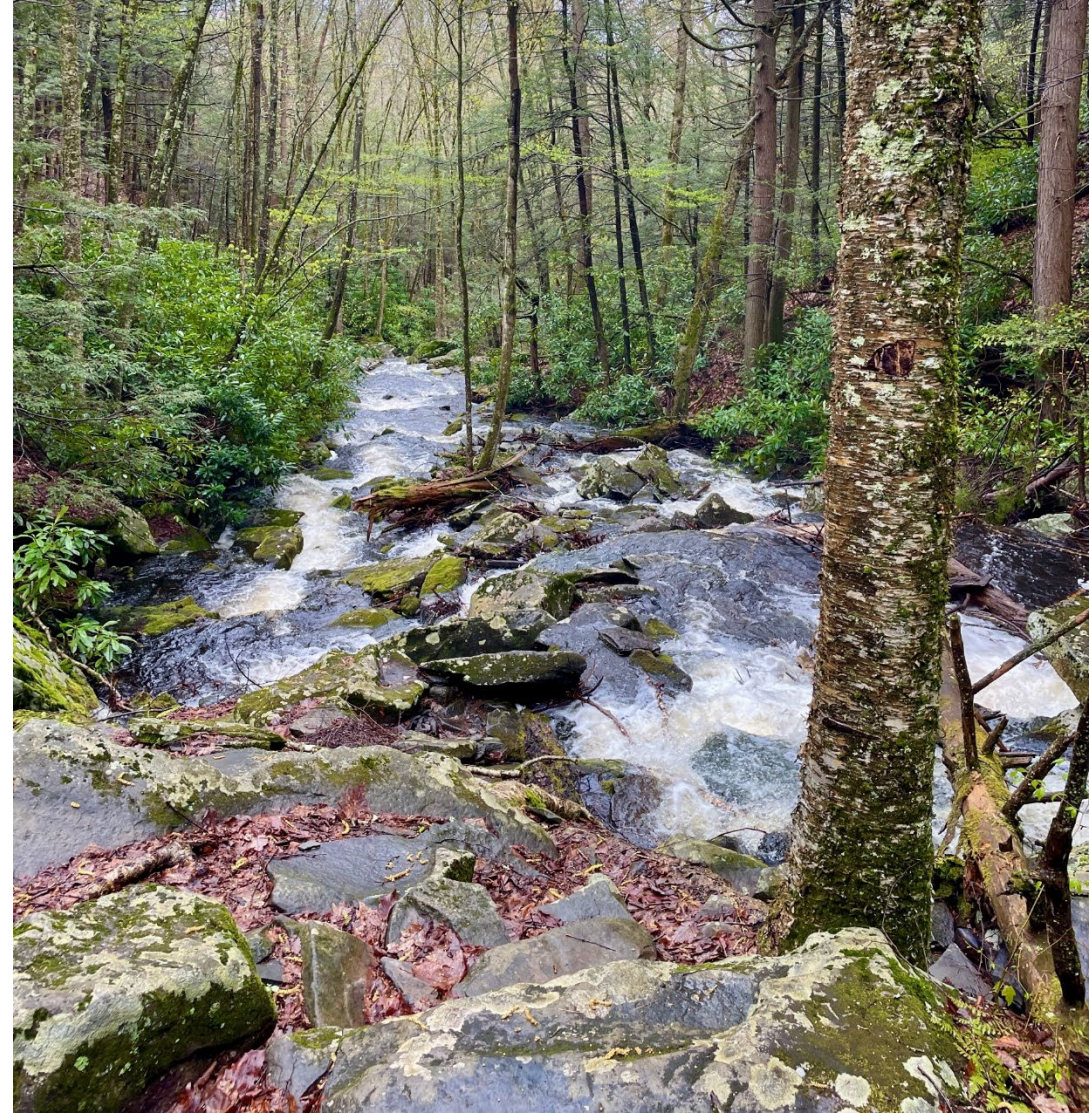
1

An adequate
and sustainable
supply of water

WATER QUALITY

2

Clean and
healthy water
resources



Today's Agenda

- Introduction to DRBC
- Project Highlights
 - Dissolved Oxygen

DRBC is working to improve dissolved oxygen in the Delaware River



The challenge

- Fish need oxygen, dissolved in water
- Levels drop with industrialization
- Improved wastewater treatment needed

Dissolved Oxygen in the Delaware River

The progress

- Shad return, sturgeon reproduce
- Summertime sag persists
- Can we do better?
- Upgrade “designated use”

DRBC Executive Director Kristen Bowman Kavanagh with an Atlantic sturgeon. This activity was conducted under a NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service ESA Permit No. 19255-01 issued to Ian Park, Fisheries Biologist, DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife.



Dissolved Oxygen in the Delaware River

Next steps

- DRBC studies and models
- US EPA proposes rule
- Final EPA rule expected Sept. 22
- DRBC to support implementation



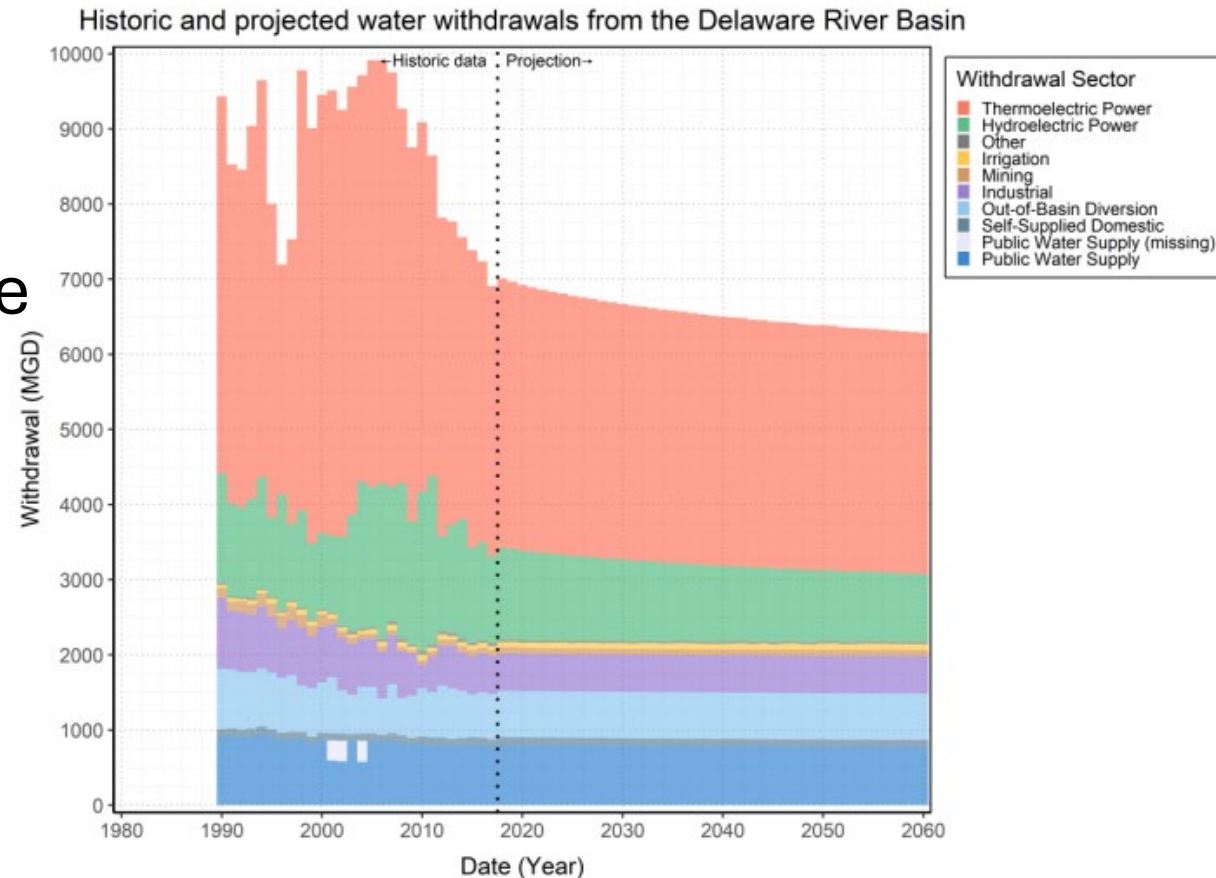
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DRBC is tracking water resources considerations for data centers

The challenge

- Rapid deployment, growing scale
- Cooling water, mostly consumptive
- Indirect water footprint
- Do we have enough water?

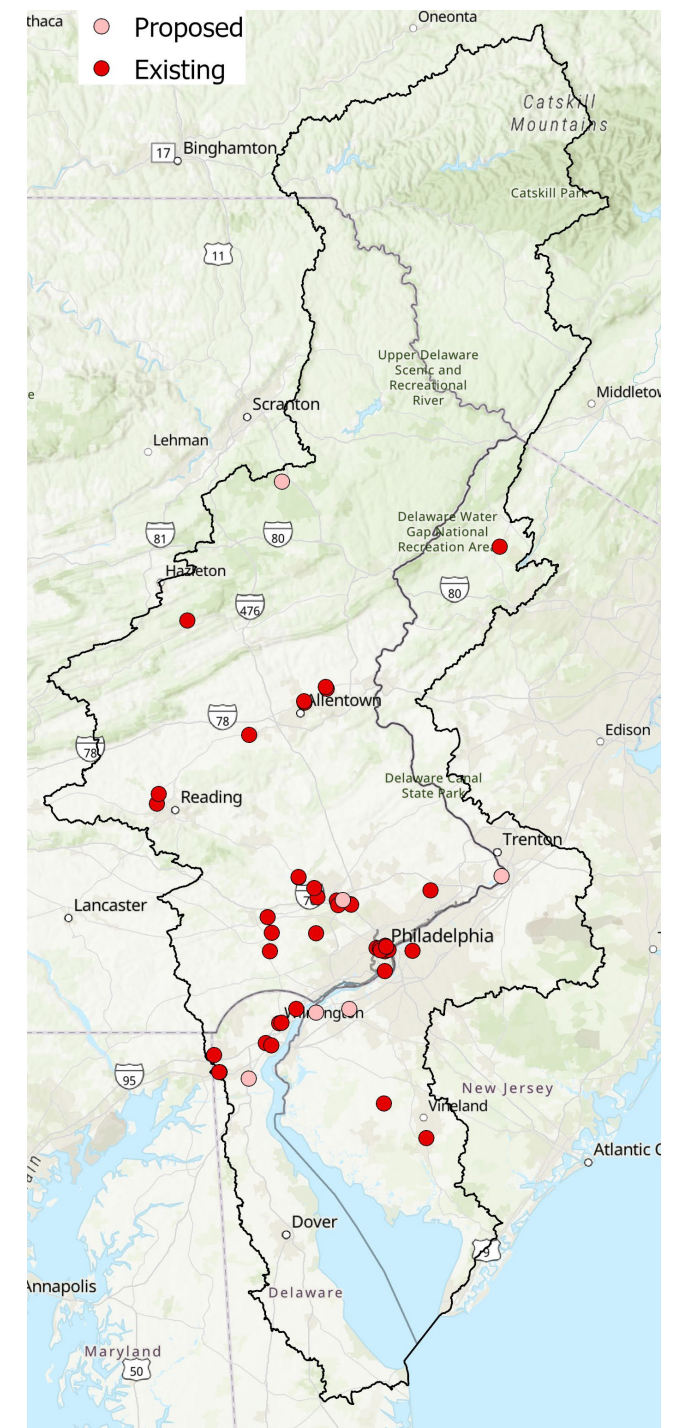


DRBC Technical Report No: 2021-4.

Water Resources Considerations for Data Centers

The progress

- Survey of existing centers
- Dialogue and outreach
- Tracking policy developments
- No permit applications to DRBC (yet)



Water Resources Considerations for Data Centers



Next steps

- Track proposed centers
- Increase transparency
- Collaborate with partners
- Commission action?

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 - Resilience Planning

DRBC is planning for water resources resilience

DELAWARE RIVER
BASIN COMMISSION'S

WATER RESOURCES RESILIENCE PLAN

Share your thoughts:
<https://tinyurl.com/DRBCCommentCard>



The challenge

- Climate change and extreme weather impacting Basin
- Commissioners direct plan
- Actions within authority



Water Resources Resilience Planning

Progress

- Drafting phase 1
- Seeking public input



Scan the
code to
begin!



Water Resources Resilience Planning

Next Steps

- Phase 2 begins next year
- Work continues in parallel
- Flood loss, water quality, more
- Additional public input



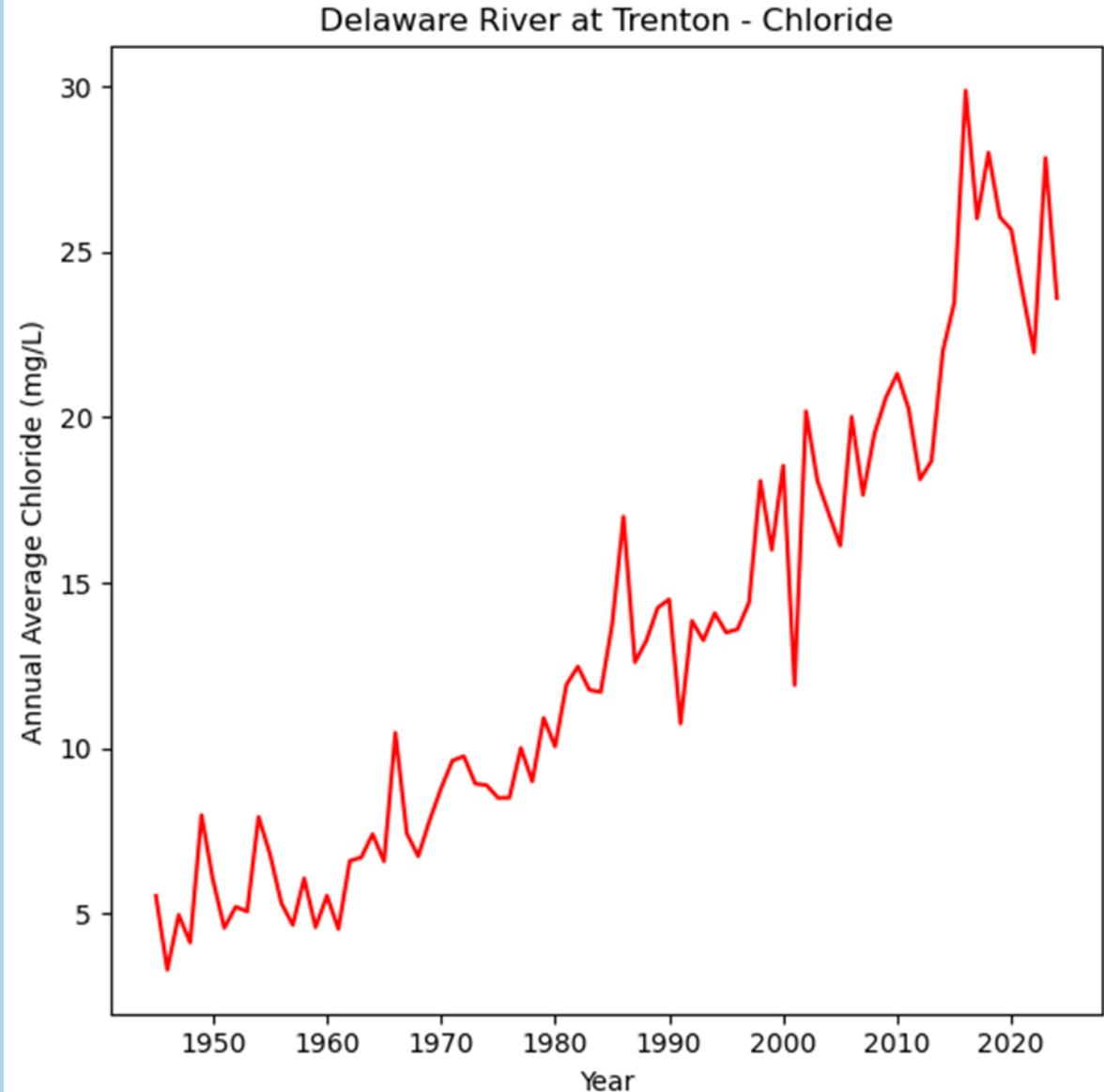
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 - Freshwater Salinization

DRBC is working to manage Freshwater Salinization

The challenge

- Chloride trending up in Basin
- Surface and groundwater
- Implications for drinking water



Data obtained from the Water Quality Portal

Freshwater Salinization

Progress

- Salinity Impacts Freshwater Toxicity (SIFT)
- Increased monitoring



Freshwater Salinization



Next steps

- Municipal partnership
- Voluntary tracking data
- Monitoring
- Funding

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Delaware River Basin Commission

DELAWARE • NEW JERSEY
PENNSYLVANIA • NEW YORK
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Delaware River Basin Commission ensures an adequate supply of high-quality water for varied uses, for over 14 million people in 4 states.

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www.drbc.gov

Credits:

Slide 3: PA State Water Plan

Slide 6; Keith Balderston

Slide 11: Temple University Archives

Slide 17: AWS Data Center, Bucks County Courier Times